

IMPORTANT LIFE-SAFETY MESSAGE / REQUIRED MAINTENANCE OF EXITS / (FIRE ESCAPES, etc.) CERTIFICATION

It has come to the attention of the Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS – the state agency that issues the uniform Massachusetts State Building Code) that some building owners of buildings containing fire escapes, egress balconies exterior bridges and exterior stair systems may inadvertently not be getting such fire escapes, etc., examined and/or tested and certified as required by certain MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS of the Massachusetts State Building Code (780 CMR).

The 6th Edition of 780 CMR, Chapter 10, Section 1028.3 titled “Testing and Certification”, addressing the maintenance of fire escapes reads as follows:

“All exterior bridges, steel or wooden stairways, fire escapes and egress balconies shall be examined and/or tested, and certified for structural adequacy and safety every five years, by a Massachusetts registered professional engineer, or others qualified and acceptable to the building official; said engineer or others shall then submit an affidavit to the building official.”

Note that the onus to comply with these maintenance requirements rests with the building owner.

Should there be any questions regarding these requirements please contact the local Building Department in the community where the subject building and fire escape system is located.

Should any person occupying a building believe that a required means of egress, including a fire escape or other exit is in disrepair, said person should immediately inform the local Building Department of such possible disrepair.

When encountering a building with fire escapes, etc., the role of the Building Department includes, but is not limited to, the need to ensure that compliance with Section 1028 in its entirety is achieved.